



Children learn a lot through play, as it is a powerful way for children to connect what they know to the world, using language and imagination.

- Provide plenty of playtime for your child, where they can use their imaginations to create stories.
- Through pretend play your child is practicing putting thoughts into words.
- Dramatic play develops your child's narrative skills as they make up stories with order (first, next, last).



# Help Your CHILD be Ready to READ!

Talk, sing, read, write, and play when engaging with your young child, as you are your child's first teacher!



Ready to Read Michigan is a program of the Library of Michigan, with support provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services. This program is based off the 5 Practices of Every Child Ready to Read® project of the Association for Library Service to Children and the Public Library Association, divisions of the American Library Association.



**LIBRARY OF MICHIGAN**

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[www.michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan](http://www.michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan)



## Early Literacy and Your Child



**LIBRARY OF MICHIGAN**

The Library of Michigan's *Ready to Read Michigan* program encourages reading aloud regularly to children during the early stages of life (birth up to age 5), as it ensures the development of early literacy skills and instills a love of reading. Early literacy is everything a child knows about reading and writing before they can actually read and write. Parents and caregivers who understand the importance of early literacy - and who take time every day to read, talk, and sing with their child, and provide them with opportunities to write and play - can help ensure their child begins school ready to read. To learn more go to [www.mi.gov/readytoread](http://www.mi.gov/readytoread). Your local public library offers storytimes and early literacy programming, as well as circulating books and children's music to families. Be sure to check with a local librarian for program information and reading recommendations.

## TALK

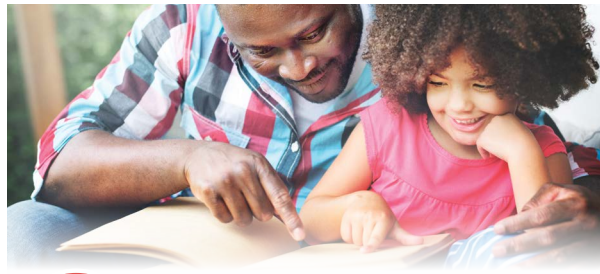
**Talking to your child and giving them many opportunities to talk helps them build a large vocabulary and increases their ability to describe events and tell stories.**

- Speak in your first language to your child, so that you are fluent to help explain the meanings of words better.
- Take a "picture walk" with your child when reading, taking turns in the conversation with your child. Picture walks help your child to make connections to stories.
- Ask your child questions that encourage longer answers, not just "yes" or "no."
- Use new words with your child, repeating them in different conversations.



**Singing helps your child learn language, as it slows language down and allows children to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words.**

- Songs have notes for different syllables, which helps your child break down words.
- Clapping along with nursery rhymes and songs helps break down the syllables.
- Songs about the alphabet teaches your child their letters, which they quickly learn, make words.



**Reading aloud is the single most important activity for your child's reading success.**

- Make reading engaging and interactive.
- Remember, very young children do not sit still long. Let them move around as you read aloud for short periods of time.
- Books provide new words that you do not use in every day conversations.
- Ask open-ended questions when reading, such as, "What do you think is going to happen next?" Give your child time to respond before giving them a cue to turn the page.



**Reading and writing go together, as they represent language. Children learn about letters, words and stories when given the chance to try writing on their own.**

- Once your child is old enough to grasp a thick crayon, give them blank paper and plenty of opportunities to scribble.
- Talk with your child about what they are drawing and make up stories with them about art and pictures.
- Encourage your young child to start "signing" their names on their artwork.

